

# PHLEGM

## SHORT FILM



NEWECW  
PRODUCTIONS



# SYNOPSIS

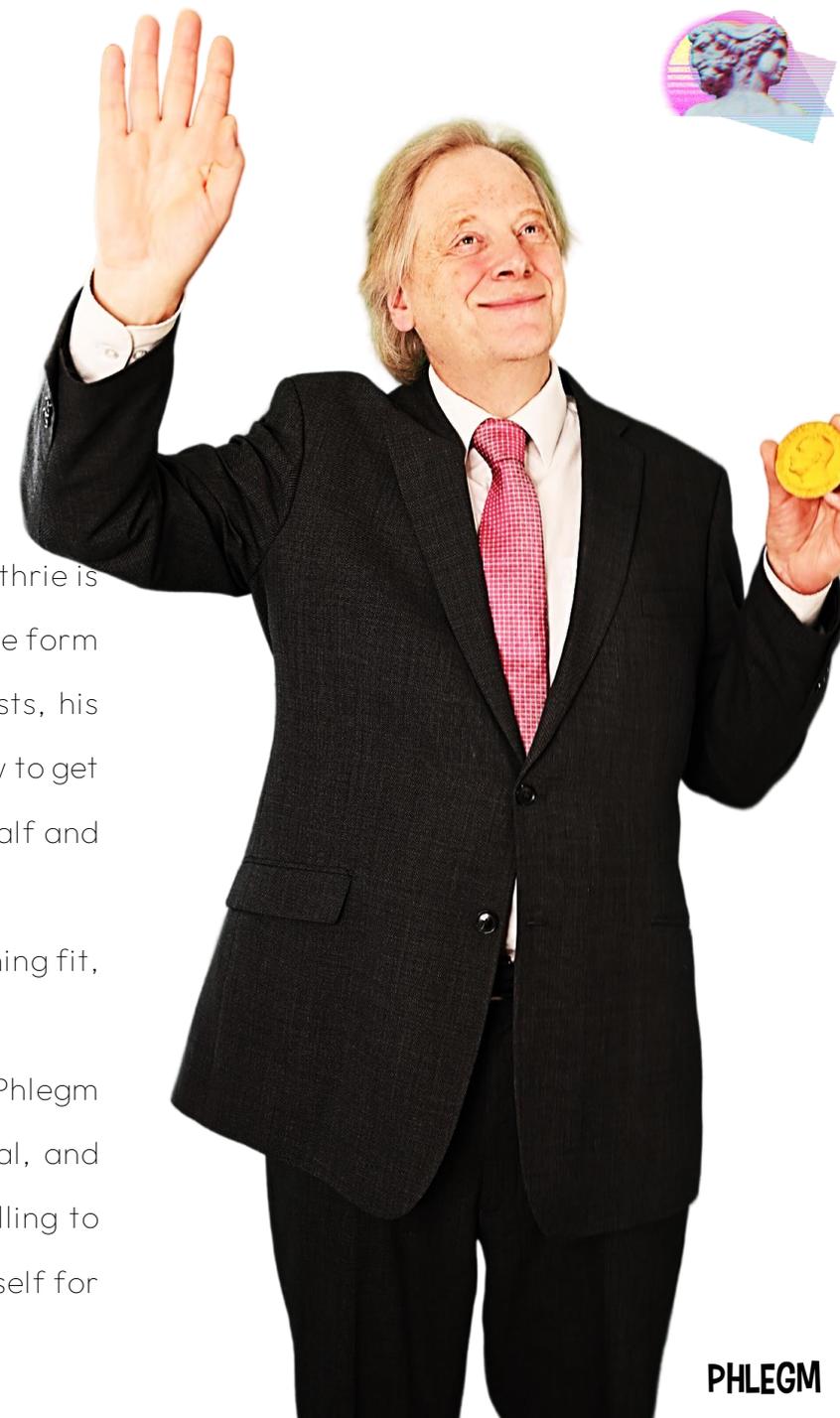
**A powerful man is confronted about his place in the world, by a being that manifests in the objects around him.**

On the eve of sending the resources needed to start a new life on Mars, Prime Minister Guthrie Gardner starts his day like any other: a shit and a shower. However, something is troubling him. At first, he tries to ignore it, but he's haunted by the physical manifestation of his moral compass, The Being.

Initially, it appears inside the toilet as... well... a shit, protesting and demanding to be listened to. However, Guthrie is familiar with The Being, and has no time for its whining, flushing it away. It quickly reappears in his mouth, in the form of his Toothbrush challenging Guthrie's choices as one of the world's most powerful people. Guthrie protests, his prime-ministerial decisions are altruistic, in his own words, he 'works hard'. But The Being knows better, and how to get under his skin. Every retort Guthrie throws, The Being has one better; angry, Guthrie snaps the toothbrush in half and bins it.

Now very eager to get ready for his big speech, Guthrie's shower is unfortunately interrupted by a violent coughing fit, which causes him to spit a MASSIVE glob of bright green phlegm.

Guthrie cannot escape it, he must confront his conscience, and for a moment we think he might be swayed. The Phlegm is convincing, logical and concise, but Guthrie's pride is much stronger, regrettably his maniacal, egotistical, and unabashed self, rises to the surface and The Being can't bring him back now. Prime Minister Guthrie is unwilling to change, and he's happy about it; after declaring himself a God, Guthrie flushes The Being away and readies himself for his big day. Although, we find out in the credits, it did not go to plan.



# THEMES

## Power corrupts all

- An immediate desire for change
- Madness behind closed doors
- Critical Thinking
- Theatre of the absurd
- Excess, Greed & Selfishness
- Greatness and narcissism
- Guilt forces itself into life
- Agenda Extremes



# CAST

## Prime Minister Guthrie



STARRING  
**JASPER JACOB**  
AS PRIME MINISTER GUTHRIE GARDNER

### Character Profile

- Bombastic
- Playful
- Mental Mayhem
- Stubborn
- Provocative

Jasper Jacob is known for various roles in such as:

- Captain Yorr in Star Wars: Return of the Jedi
- Loerd Hollingworth in Father Brown
- Henry Reed in Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story
- Other films include RocknRolla (2008), The Iron Lady (2011) and The Turn of the Screw (1974)

Guthrie's arrogance knows no bounds.

He easily ignores his failures, and has an amazing ability to conjure the perfect lie to protect himself, from... himself! However, when a relentless voice of reason and morality invades every facet of his life, it becomes increasingly impossible for him to avoid it, and in doing so, he is slowly losing his sanity, which is especially concerning as he is the leader of nation.

Jasper Jacob gave us a masterclass in how to convey the ludicrousness of this character in a controlled manner, which is especially difficult when talking to inanimate objects. He fully engaged himself into the absurdity of the situation, and impeccably added Guthrie, to a long line of 'devoted' leaders.



# CAST

## The Being

(Phlegm, Toothbrush & Shit)



The Being is the complete absolute antithesis to the character of Guthrie, she's enlightened and thinks critically. Once the film was edited, a variety of voice options were investigated to find the best suit for the character, we wanted a voice of morality, that wasn't preachy or disingenuous.

Nova was without a doubt, the perfect fit for the role, providing the perfect third dimension to the film. Chilled and friendly, she provided a wonderfully warm and comforting voice, that resonated with anyone who listens.

We attempted a number of different readings and interpretations on many of The Beings lines of dialogue, until we found the right balance of sincere knowledge, and exhaustive frustration. Nova delivered a beautifully genuine performance, it encompassed a valued awareness of the virtues she is advocating for, whilst conveying the desperation of the character, via her rich voice acting.



### Voice Actor

- 'Nova' specialises in providing engaging voice talent
- She demonstrates an intelligent ability to get the most of out a character
- 20+ years experience recording vocals

AND  
**ADRIANNE 'NOVA' BACON**  
AS THE VOICE OF THE INANIMATES



### Character Profile

- Authentic
- Honest
- Brutal
- Relentless
- Cutthroat
- Provocative
- Wisdom

# WRITER STATEMENTS



**MICHAEL SAVVA**

While a discussion with a sick, vile, sticky piece of Phlegm wasn't an obvious film idea, it's simplicity and potential intrigued me enough to suggest it as a co-writing project.

Writing with a stranger was a new challenge that I quickly embraced; it put me on the spot and compelled me to suggest ideas, no matter how radical they might be, this helped us focus our direction, whilst getting to know one another.

Living in two different parts of the country, Liam and I discussed our own experiences of lockdown and the affect it was having on us. Once we realised the script was an opportunity for us to therapise our frustration with the hyperreal performance playing out around us, Prime Minister Guthrie was born, and with him, a whole new dimension of conversation and backstory also unlocked for us.

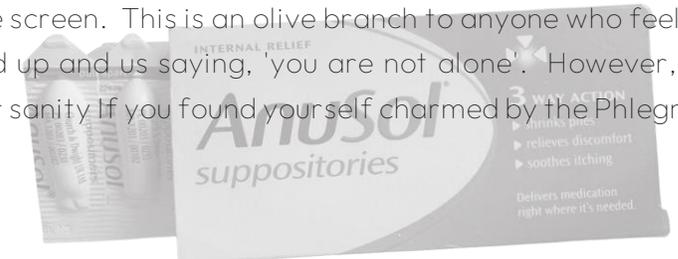
The script began to take shape quickly, capturing a hope that our leaders still look toward their moral compass, captured in the voice of the Phlegm (and friends), however, no matter how much I hope, a taste of power, eventually and as disgustingly as phlegm, corrupts all.



**LIAM DONOHOE**

After a long, weighty absence from writing, 2021 was primed for me to return to it. It was important for me that it stayed fun and that the next project was collaborative. A series of clicks on the internet led me to striking up a writing partnership with Michael Savva. Over a zoom call, we shared each other's ideas for a potential short film, eventually agreeing to develop Michael's idea 'Phlegm'. When I heard this idea, I was struck by its quirkiness, potential for off-beat humour and political satire. The writing sessions have been fun, imaginative and boundless.

A lot of ideas have been written in and taken out in pursuit of the ideal script. I believe 'Phlegm' perfectly captures the political climate today. We are led by self-serving, egotistical maniacs who, if not unstable already, are one second away from it. I hope that people who watch this feel unsettled, comforted unable to laugh at the caricatures on the screen. This is an olive branch to anyone who feels as though the world is messed up and us saying, 'you are not alone'. However, I would advise you to check your sanity if you found yourself charmed by the Phlegm character.



# CREW

## The Dream Team



- FIRST CAMERA ASSISTANT - DOMENICO PALOMBA
- SOUND RECORDIST - EMANUELE CORTI
- PHOTOGRAPHY - NIKI BRUCKNER
- SET DRESSER - MORGAN COULL
- PRODUCTION ASSISTANT - OLIVIA UNTERHALTER
- SCRIPT SUPERVISOR - LIAM DONOHOE
- POST PRODUCTION - NEW ECW PRODUCTIONS
- GRADE & COLOUR - JOSH WHITE
- SOUND EDITOR - STEWART DUGDALE
- MUSICAL COMPOSITION - MARCUS JOHNSON
- MUSICAL ARRANGEMENT - MICHAEL SAVVA
- ANIMATORS - TOMISLAV JAKUPEC & PRORA
- GRAPHIC DESIGN - CHEXXUZ



# LOCATION

'The Maiden' East London



Ambiguous Luxury



Plush,  
quirky &  
theatrical

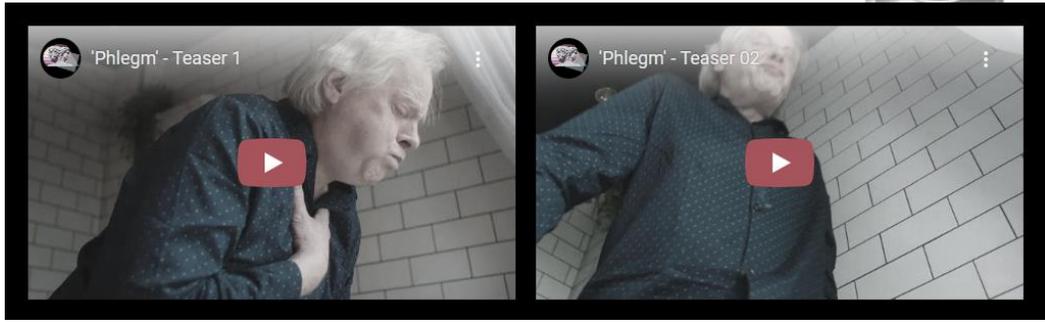


The location is  
as an extension  
of the mind



# DISTRIBUTION

## Teasers



[youtube.com/NEWECWproductions](https://youtube.com/NEWECWproductions)

## International Festival 2022/23



Correct as of Dec 2023

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